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HOW 4-H CLUB BOYS AND GIRLS MAKE HOME LIFE HAPPIER

A radio talk by Miss Mary Rokahr, Extension Economist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, delivered in the August 3, 1935, National 4-H club radio program and broadcast by a network of 59 associate NBC radio stations.

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"To make the best better" is the 4-H Club motto with which you are all familiar. I should like to add another one to it. It would be: "To do a good deed every day to make home life happier". I know many of you 4-H club boys and girls have already achieved this maxim by taking care of yourselves. By that I mean learning to eat the right kind of foods that will build health; raising, canning and cooking these foods; selecting and mending your clothes; keeping your rooms neat and orderly; doing the chores on time; adding to your income and sometimes that of your parents by raising poultry and livestock; growing crops; and by accepting responsibilities in home and community programs.

So to-day I do not have to talk to you in generalities. I can give you some fine examples of what 4-H club boys and girls are doing throughout the United States to make their home life happier.

Patrick Manning, a 4-H club member in Franklin County, Massachusetts, belongs to a club which took part in a statewide "fix-It" Campaign. Patrick repaired fences, his brother's toys, his mother's chairs, and in other ways helped to make the furnishings of his home more usable, and thus added to the family happiness.

Katherine Bean, of the Southside Club, in Etowah County, Alabama, says: "I took sewing club work first and learned to make my own clothes which saves my mother a lot of sewing. Now I am taking cooking club work and I have learned to cook many things which I did not know before I joined the 4-H club. I help my mother with her cooking just lots."

Three sisters in Pulaski County, Kentucky, made their family happier by improving their home grounds. They hauled stones from a creek nearby making a stepping stone walk. In the backyard they built bird baths and a lily pond, which is surrounded by 150 varieties of flowers, trees and shrubs, which did not cost them a penny. The three sisters did not do this alone - the entire family cooperated. Each family member had a definite task. That, perhaps, is the secret of happy family life - family cooperation.

Tilford W. Cocks, County Club Agent, Tolland County, Connecticut, reports that 4-H Club members in his State made games and home play equipment during this last year. Mr. Cocks says it is impossible to estimate the value of these articles, since their actual value is so little as compared with the indirect value or good that they do in the homes, in the form of good, wholesome recreation or entertainment, keeping the family together, and strengthening the relationship between children and parents. Mr. Cocks also says that through this activity the parents learned that a large percentage of the boys and girls are growing up without the least knowledge of the use of tools.

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In Minnesota parents and 4-H club boys and girls cooperate in partnership agreements, in raising certain farm commodities. The boys and girls also keep the household and farm account records that bring about good business management.

Doing everyday jobs or chores cheerfully and on time, parents tell me, is one of the very best ways to help make family life happier. 4-H Clubs in Baggs, Wyoming, send us an example of much happiness given to both parents and boys and girls by using a family bulletin board or chore board on which are listed the duties of each family member for the day or week.

As chores are done, each person has the privilege of checking it off, and thus you see, reminding is made unnecessary.

Mattie Jordan, a negro home demonstration agent in Mississippi, reports that the 4-H club girls in her State are teaching their little brothers and sisters to play more in the sunshine during the winter for good health; they help their mothers sew and make simple garments that are easy to put on and in every way help their little brothers and sisters to be obedient, self-reliant and unselfish.

An example of how 4-H boys and girls help make family life happy by leading in community activities comes to us from California. A 4-H girls' club, established a Sunday School in a community where there were no religious services and now there is in this community a church for adults and a Christian Endeavor Society for young people.

Iowa 4-H club homes this last year were made especially happy because the boys and girls all learned to sing selections from the opera, "Bohemian Girl", and some of them, as well as their parents, took part in June in a magnificent presentation of this opera at the State College at Ames.

4-H club boys and girls throughout the United States are helping to make home life happier. Sometimes by fixing up and improving the yard or the furnishings of the house; by doing household and farm tasks without being reminded; the girls, by learning to buy wisely, to sew, cook, bake, clean, and to manage; and the boys by learning to farm by the best methods.

I have had the privilege of meeting many 4-H boys and girls and their parents throughout the United States and I should say that happy family life is the result when every member does his daily tasks cheerfully.

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